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POEM

ON THE

DEATH

Of the HONOURABLE the

Lady *Elizabeth Haſtings.*

LONDON:

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POEM, &c.

AWAY with Tears, the Cypreſs, and the Yew,
And all the ſad ſolemnity of grief:
Which to the dead however juſtly due,
Neither to her, nor us can bring relief.

But let the Muſe attend the Funeral;
Who to the skies can raiſe *Eliza*'s name:
And always ready is, at Virtue's call,
To give a ſecond life in laſting Fame.

From her high Birth no taint of Pride ſhe took,
Not ev'n of State the condeſcending part:
For all was nat'ral ſweetneſs: in her look
Was open laid the meaning of her heart.

But this advantage from her Birth ſhe drew,
She thought it ſhame to be leſs good, than great:
And to prevail on others, well ſhe knew,
That Rank to her example added weight.

This

This gave her courage too, before the Great,
To hold up Virtue's undeceiving glaſs;
Which with contempt in meaner hands had met:
But ſhe above it, as their equal, was.

An ample fortune from the Race ſhe ſprang,
Was fund for Gaiety, Expence, and State;
And being noble, amiable, and young,
Fair was her view of happineſs compleat.

But her firſt thought was; Why all this to me?
While others to reverſe of fortune born,
Mourn out a life of helpleſs miſery,
With want, with ſickneſs, injuries, or ſcorn?

By this 'twas plain, to make the Poor her care
Heav'n meant: and that her wealth was but in
What to the poor, and to her ſelf what ſhare, [truſt.
Requir'd her thought; for ſure ſhe would be juſt.

Then lift ſhe up the golden ſcales; and laid
In one the Wants of life, in th' other Gold:
And ſoon ſhe found, that, as they equal weigh'd,
Relief to Want ſhould full proportion hold.

And now her Charities were ſpread around:
The ſick look'd up; the widow dry'd her tears;
The hungry food, the naked raiment found;
The Orphan ſmil'd; and Age forgat its years.

This

This did the outward ills of life relieve ;
And no leſs care to Moral ills was due.
For this ſhe ſaw her Seminaries thrive :
And Youth, and Virtue up together grew.

Where there was ſmall encouragement, or none,
To keep men good ; or teach 'em how to mend ;
She pious *Anna*'s meaſures made her own :
Alike the Bounty ; and alike the end.

Large was this view ; nor by the ſeas confin'd :
In foreign climes, where ignorance prevail'd,
To plant religion, and inſtruct mankind,
By her ſupply'd, the Miſſionary ſail'd.

From all that ſhe had done there never flow'd
The leaſt reflection, that could make her vain :
She firſt thank'd heaven for its gifts beſtow'd ;
Then, that ſhe had a heart to give again.

But whenſoe'er a great and public uſe
Call'd on her charity, ſhe always ſtood
Firm againſt cavil, that ſhe was profuſe ;
And dar'd to be magnificently good.

As much ſhe ſcorn'd the babbling of the fools,
That would believe no farther than they ſaw ;
And ſteady kept to her religious rules ;
Avow'd her Maker's worſhip, and his awe.

Near ſixty ſtages of her life had paſt,
Clear as the ſun, that meaſur'd out her ſtay:
And now her care was how to ſet at laſt;
And make her Ev'ning anſwer to her Day.

To form the pattern of her life compleat,
There wanted now to teach the dying part,
A leſſon few can by inſtruction get;
But an example prints it in the heart.

The firſt alarm when therefore ſickneſs gave,
Her forces all into her heart ſhe drew:
Not with a hope life's citadel to ſave;
For death would conquer at the laſt, ſhe knew.

But there the armour of her ſoul was laid;
That when the outworks all ſhould ruin'd be,
And death's aſſault upon that fortreſs made,
Her ſoul might ſcorn to fear; and march out free.

Of that ſecure; ſhe haſten'd next to clear
All the demands of duty here below:
For well ſhe judg'd, that all who are ſincere,
Make even with both worlds before they go.

She that in life had ſo much bounty ſhown,
Thought it became her likewiſe to die kind:
And therefore all her charities to crown,
Still to do good, fair Legacies aſſign'd.

This done; her ſun now haſt'ning to the Weſt,
Warn'd her to put her wedding garment on:
Waiting the Bridegroom's call her Lamp ſhe dreſt;
And the pure ſoul was ready to be gone.

But o'er this calm a ſudden tempeſt ſpread;
For Law ſtept forth her Bounties to defeat:
And in reverſe of nature's order ſaid,
That life, not death, ſhould make her Will com-[pleat.

And what could life now hov'ring on the wing?
And muſt ſhe die leſs good than ſhe deſign'd?
One way was left; her righteous cauſe to bring
Before that judge, who death itſelf could bind.

She pray'd; and death ſtood off: on roll'd her days
To make their number up; and ſome few more
Were giv'n her, to return her Maker praiſe,
For this laſt kindneſs to her ſelf, and Poor.

And now the hours of death drew on; a ſcene
Mournful to thoſe ſhe was to leave behind.
Nature grew wild with grief: but ſhe ſerene
Thus gently chid their tears; and ſtill was kind.

How could you wiſh me here a longer ſtay,
The hardeſt part now of my journey o'er?
To mourn my loſs, is to forget the day,
When we ſhall meet again, to part no more:

And blame not Death, the friend that ſets me free
From my dark priſ'n; and opens to my ſight
The long'd-for proſpect of eternity.
Thither, farewel, I feel my ſoul take flight.

Seen by the Muſe (and what eſcapes her eye?)
A ſtarry crown around her temples blaz'd,
As in a Robe of white ſhe paſs'd the ſky:
And their new Saint the Angels met, and prais'd.

Then open'd wide the manſions of the Bleſt;
And a voice came from the eternal Light;
Well done, good Servant; enter into Reſt.
The Angels cry'd Amen; and clos'd the ſight.

FINIS.